

# 1. INTRODUCTION

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## NONPOINT SOURCE POLLUTION IN MAINE

This manual is intended to help people who work in marinas and boatyards to reduce water pollution resulting from their activities. The practices and tips described in this manual are designed to protect Maine surface water and to sustain the natural ecology of lake and coastal waters ecosystems.

Pollution from surface runoff and other diffuse sources, known as "nonpoint source pollution" (NPS), is caused by rainfall or snow melt moving over and through the ground and carrying natural and man-made pollutants into lakes, rivers, streams, wetlands, estuaries, other coastal waters and ground waters. Pollution from discrete sources such as oil, hazardous materials, or detergents from faulty septic systems or boat toilets can also be considered nonpoint source pollution. Many contaminants, such as bacteria and viruses, nutrients, suspended solids, petroleum products, and other toxins are introduced into the aquatic environment from either polluted runoff or accidents. Studies show that these contaminants have significant effects on water quality and can affect seafood harvests and recreational activities, such as boating and swimming. Pollution can also depress the local economy if tourism, recreational boating, and fishing industries decline.

## POLLUTION MANAGEMENT AT MARINAS AND BOATYARDS

Marinas and boatyards are usually located on or adjacent to coastal waters, lakes, and rivers, and their activities can contribute significant pollution to waterbodies. For example, marina construction may alter the type of aquatic and upland habitat on and adjacent to the site. Fueling, maintenance operations, scraping and painting, the improper discharge of boat toilet contents, and other common activities can discharge pollutants that affect water quality.

The most effective way to reduce polluted runoff is by pollution management practices and controls (called Best Management Practices or BMPs). This manual describes many of these techniques and is intended to help marina and boatyard operators identify which pollution control practices work best for their site. When applied correctly and appropriately, these BMPs should also help the boating facility conform with state and federal laws protecting water quality. Although the BMPs included in this document are based on a wide range of sources and experiences, they are not all-inclusive, and do not preclude marina operators from applying additional alternate BMPs to reduce nonpoint sources of pollution. Therefore, marina and boatyards managers are encouraged to apply their expertise and skill to develop technically sound management practices that are as capable of minimizing or eliminating nonpoint sources of pollution as do the Best Management Practices (BMPs) presented in this document.

Throughout this document, the term boating facilities or "marinas" will be used to refer to marinas, yacht clubs, and boatyards. A boating facility includes any dock, pier, wharf, float, floating business, or combination of such facilities that serve five or more recreational boats as a commercial enterprise or in association with a club. The types of marina and boat yard operations that this manual applies to include:

- Recreational boat docking facilities;
- Commercial boat docking facilities;
- Boat storage facilities; and
- Boat building and maintenance facilities.

Any questions about specific regulations, compliance responsibilities, or the implementation of BMPs should be directed to the nearest DEP office.

